WARMING AND VENTILATING.

TO THE EDITOR.

SIR,—A copy of the last number of your excellent paper having been forwarded me, in which my name has been introduced by your correspondent, Mr. Spencer, in the course of his remarks on warming and ventilation, I feel it due both to the public and myself to add my testimony to the statement made by that gentleman relative to the bad effects produced by the extremely improper means adopted in the Infirmary for Diseases of the Chest, Artillery-street, Bishopsgate-street, for heating the wards. The picture he draws is certainly not exaggerated. The total want of sewerage and ventillation on the premises of the institution, the highly improper practice of crowding several patients into rooms, the largest of which, for seven patients, is not more than 23 feet by 14 feet, and 8 feet high; the seclusion of air by stopping up the chimneys for the purpose of heating the atmosphere by means of German stoves of thin sheet iron, which are very often at a red heat, and emit an arid carbonaceous odour; the combination of the various smells emanating from the patient's skin, expectorations, dejections, food, bed-clothes, &c., the whole aggravated by the foul air conducted from the privies and cesspool below, through the funnel-shaped space extending from the bottom of the house to the roof, without any exit to the open air, present a group of circumstances which must have astonished your readers, many of whom will doubtless regard it as scarcely possible that an institution professing to receive consumptive and asthmatic patients, and to imitate the climate of Madeira! in the heart of London! and middle of this enlightened century! should exhibit such gross neglect or mismanagement, or something worse.

In justice to my own character, you will permit me to explain through the medium of your columns that I have from time to time urged the individuals who have taken on themselves the management of the institution, to provide suitable accommodation for the patients. So far from succeeding with them, I have been personally insulted for interfering, as they conceived, with matters that did not fall properly within my sphere. Under a sense of public duty I at length represented the state of the Infirmary to Sir James Graham and the Poor Law Commissioners. By the latter the case was referred to the Guardians of the East London Union, who sent a person to inquire into the correctness of my representations. That person, on their behalf, regretted that it was not in their power to interfere, but expressed his abhorrence and disgust at the filthy and every way unsuited state of the premises. Several highly respectable gentlemen, medical and others, who have occasionally called on me at the Infirmary, have expressed themselves in similar terms of mixed surprise and condemnation. That which renders the entire matter more reprehensible, is the flattering account lately presented to the public in what is styled the 29th Annual Report of the Infirmary,* a short extract from which I here beg to trouble you with. Speaking of the utility of a warm and equable temperature, in cases of pulmonary disease, the Report goes on to say that "it may be provided in this country; though the arrangements necessary for the purpose may not perhaps be equal in efficiency with the more natural remedy of removal to a southern latitude. Thus the idea suggested itself that an institution, in which the temperature of the air was duly regulated night and day, and having proper aid and superintendence, might be the means of mitigating pain and restoring the inestimable blessing of health to many of our suffering poor, and experience has proved it to be so. The trial was made by the establishment of this Infirmary in 1814, and has succeeded beyond expectation. These cheering results, whilst they hold out the strongest inducements to the supporters of so valuable an institution not to relax their exertions in its behalf, give it a powerful claim to the sympathy and assistance of the public at large, &c. &c."

Look on this picture, and on that drawn by your correspondent. I have no words strong enough to express my dissatisfaction with the painful contrast between the simple unvarnished facts, and the above delusive representation.

I am Sir, your obedient servant,

P. H. RAMADGE, M.D.

24, Ely-place, Aug. 29, 1843.

ARTIFICIAL GLAZING.—As a covering for flowers, &c., nothing can be better than the varnish or solution of caoutchouc, spread with a clean brush upon fine holland—not calico. When the linen is properly strained upon frames it is as tight as a drum-head, and is no contemptible substitute for glass;—indeed, its chastened light renders its sometimes preferable.

* This Institution has existed for 29 years, but there has been no Committee meetings for several years, nor Annual Reports, though this is styled the 29th Report.

TO THE EDITOR.

SIR,—Having observed in No. 27, an article upon varnishes as applied to wood, metal, &c., and possessing some architectural drawings which I should like to varnish (but not knowing how), perhaps some of your correspondents could enlighten me as to the mode of sizing the drawing and preparing it for the varnish, and also as to the best description of varnish to be used, as both should be perfectly colourless, the great fault in varnishing architectural drawings being their liability to turn yellow.

I remain, Sir, your most obedient servant.

D. V. S.

Wednesday, August 30, 1843.

NEW SOUTH WALES.

We have been favoured with the copy of a letter from Melbourne, New South Wales, addressed to a gentleman in Manchester, dated in December last, from Mr. Charles Laing, architect, who lately emigrated to that colony from Manchester. The document is full of interest, and for the gratification of our readers we publish the following portion of it:—

"For your information or any other person, I will give you a short description of the locality of this place. What is meant by Port Phillip, is an immense district of country forming the southern part of New South Wales. It is bounded on the east by the South Pacific Ocean, on the west by South Australia, on the north by the Sydney district, and on the south by Bass's Straits, which divides this country from Van Diemen's Land. The distance from this country to Sydney is about 600 miles. New Zealand is about 2,000 miles further to the eastward, and lies in 175 deg. east longitude. Port Phillip is approached from Bass's Straits into Hobson's Bay by a narrow inlet not more than a quarter of a mile wide, but at once expanding into a most magnificent bay about 50 miles long, in some places 20 and 30 miles wide, possessing deep water and safe anchorage. A pilot-station and lighthouse is erected at the heads or entrances of the bay, from whence you proceed due north 40 or 50 miles to William's Town, where a lighthouse is erected, and the Harbour-Master's Office, Water Police, and other Government Offices are placed here. After rounding a point of land, the ship anchors, and you are in Australia Felix or Port Phillip. The anchorage ground is due north, three miles from Melbourne. From the bay you are conveyed by a very pretty steam-boat called the *Vesta*, belonging to Messrs. Manton and Co., of this place, and imported by them from London, and built by Wm. Fairbairn and Co., of Blackwall. The bay is joined by the river Yarra-Yarra, a splendid river, not so wide as the Irwell, but much deeper, and deep up to the banks like a canal. Small crafts, such as brigs, schooners, &c., of two hundred tons, come up the river, up the Yarra-Yarra, to Melbourne, the capital of Port Phillip. I was very much struck, and most agreeably disappointed, with the appearance of Melbourne. Instead of finding a quantity of mud and wood huts on landing, a goodly town presented itself to my view—well laid out. The streets are spacious, being 22 yards wide for the principal ones, and 11 yards for the intermediate. The streets cross each other at right angles. Many excellent buildings are progressing, and the streets are being rapidly filled up. Collins-street is the principal thoroughfare. We have four newspapers published here, viz. the *Patriot*, *Herald*, *Gazette*, and the *Times*, of which I cannot speak very favourably. There are of religious establishments one Episcopalian Church, one Scotch Church, one Wesleyan Chapel, one Baptist, and one Catholic; a Mechanics' School of Arts, but not used for such purpose at present; a respectable Post Office; three banks, each issuing their own notes; and several public companies. There are two very good and substantial corn and flour mills in the town, one belonging to Messrs. Manton and Co., and another to Messrs. Allison and Knight, and a very small foundry: this is the total of our steam-power on land. I forgot to mention that Melbourne is proposed to be divided by the Yarra-Yarra, and called North and South Melbourne. It is North Melbourne that is now formed; South Melbourne is in embryo, and land reserved. The town is exceedingly well situated; the proximity of the Yarra-Yarra, with its never-failing supply of clear water, and its short distance from the sea, will ensure, to a considerable extent, health and facilities for the various mechanical operations man may be induced to bring forth. The meaning in the native tongue of the Yarra-Yarra is *flow-flow*, or overflowing. Several villages are forming in the neighbourhood, but go on slowly. The scenery is in many cases very beautiful, and wherever this beautiful scenery is, the land is cultivated; the reason is obvious; hill and dale give shelter to the crops, &c., from the hot winds which blow from the north very frequently during the summer months, which are very hot indeed. I can compare it to nothing less than a hot flame blowing against your person. What do you think of 125 degrees of heat in the shade, which is a moderate estimation? When you take a vapour-bath at home, the heat seldom exceeds 120 deg.; in fact, a higher degree would be injurious, but in the sun, to those (as I have frequently) who are obliged to face it, it is distressing indeed. The usual way to prevent the annoyance of its full effect is to shut yourself in your house, close your sun-blinds, and keep as much air and light out as possible. By this means you get it over. But as the evening closes the thunder and lightning is terrific; you would think heaven and earth were coming together. The hot winds seldom continue more than one day, but they occasionally last for two and three days. House-rent, when I arrived, was exceedingly high. When we arrived in November last, we occupied a small cottage in the town, containing three very inferior rooms, viz. a small living room, a scullery behind, and a bed-room formed in the roof, for which we paid 17s. 6d. per week, or 45*l*. 10s. per annum—the same house could be got in Manchester for 8*l*. a-year or less. I subsequently occupied one a short distance in the bush, for which I paid for six months, at the rate of 80*l*. per year, for four rooms, a detached kitchen and servant's room, with stable and garden—and was considered cheap. I now occupy a good house on the premises of the company, for whom I am manager, rent-free. But rents are considerably reduced—at least 25 per cent. Provisions were (but now reduced) considerably above their value—for instance, potatoes, 4d. per lb.; flour, 5d.; butter, 3s.; eggs, 5s. per dozen; a bottle of ale or porter, 2s. 6d. They are now just half the price, and beef and mutton can be bought of the best quality, and very fine, at 2½d. per lb. Luxuries, such as wine and spirits, ale and porter, by buying a quantity from the merchants, can be bought nearly as cheap as in England, but the poor man cannot manage this at first; he must purchase by retail, and is charged accordingly. In a new place like this it would be difficult to say what it may come to in a commercial point of view; it is only six years since it became a settlement, and has now about 10,000 inhabitants in it. It is possible that it may overdo the matter, or, in other words, and to use a colonial phrase, it may have gone a-head too fast. I do not mean to say such is the case; but it is not improbable, and so long as the settlers can realize a profit upon their productions, Melbourne will always be a flourishing place. One thing I will mention here, and I think you will agree with me, that in all new colonies, agriculture and the production of stock in the first grand principle. Now the Government agents have been sending ship-loads of unfortunate operatives from the manufacturing districts. Spinners and such like men are not calculated for agricultural labour; the work is in itself too heavy for them, having always been employed in light labour, and from the very nature of their prior employment, cannot work—that is to say, to do a day's work with the spade, the hoe, the plough, or the harrow. Mechanics are equally the same; there is no field for their ingenuity, and what can they do? Many have been obliged, to save themselves from starving, to work upon the Government roads—men who at home could earn their 2*l*. and 3*l*. a-week. Men from the agricultural districts are what we require. Regular English farm servants can readily find employment at 40*l*. a-year and their rations—that is, meat, drink, and lodging. Every article that you are *compelled* to purchase is dear; but by a little experience it is found that we can purchase what we require at a moderate price, by attending auctions, &c., which are frequent enough. Money is dear—that is to say, a person wanting to borrow cash upon mortgage, for which he could have plenty at 4 or 5 per cent. in England, willingly pays 20 per cent.; and I have known 25 per cent. paid, and upon good security. In fact, I could guarantee 12 per cent. through any of the bankers here at once, and I have no hesitation in declaring that a person possessing 2,000*l*. per annum could realise 400*l*. per annum upon it. At home it is not worth more than 100*l*. You may say that on the other hand the expense of living would counterbalance the difference; but I assure you that I can live as cheap here as in England. Within the last few days Melbourne has been made a corporate town, and I intend offering myself as "surveyor" to the corporation. I forgot in its proper place to give you the names of the wild animals of Port Phillip. There is the kangaroo, the kangaroo-rat, and the wallaby, of that tribe. There is also the native bear, the wild cat, the opossum, the flying squirrel, and the wild dog, a creature very like a huge overgrown fox or moderate-sized wolf; indeed its habits are similar, making sad havoc among the sheep. Snakes also are numerous in the bush; their bite, unless immediate aid is procured, is fatal. They are not large, and are easily destroyed. I have met with

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